

Disney icer clicks in Southern Calif., will tour Far East...

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produced by Kenneth Feld, president and chief executive officer of the ice shows and Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, posted grosses "up close to 100 percent," confirmed Allen Bloom, senior vice president of marketing and sales for Ringling.

The show played Anaheim Convention Center, Dec. 26-31; Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, Jan. 2-14, and Long Beach Entertainment & Convention Center, 16-19, where the four days and eight shows were "up 100 percent," according to building Manager George Matson. The other ice show unit, Walt Disney's Magic Kingdom, is playing the East Coast and Midwest this year. It takes each production two years to criss-cross the country.

The World on Ice unit has been themed around celebration of Donald Duck's 50th birthday and is in its second year in the U.S. Once it wraps the season in May, preparation will be completed to ship the production overseas.

"It will be the first time since we've owned the ice shows that it's gone overseas. I would guess it's the first American ice show to go to the Far East in 10 years," Bloom said. The show will play Japan and the Far East, with an itinerary yet to be determined, Bloom reconfirmed when seen Feb. 2 at the District VII convention of the International Assn. of Auditorium Managers in Long Beach.

The production will involve taking 50 cast and crew and two ice tanks with compressors, along with the costumes and scenery, across the ocean, Bloom said. "We're designing new grid work and frames to hold the curtains and props. It's an all-new design, like an erector set." This trip is an experiment in portability as the show must be totally self-contained because available technical equipment in venues booked is so inconsistent, he explained. The goal has always been to take the ice show overseas, but the unfavorable exchange rate on U.S. dollars delayed the move, Bloom added.

Meanwhile, another World on Ice unit will be prepared for the U.S., to open at the Lakeland (Fla.) Civic Center in September. The Magic Kingdom unit, which features the character Goofy, will travel to the West Coast next year, completing its circuit.

This season, business for both ice show units has been "up substantially, almost everywhere," said Bloom, who declined to give gross dollar figures. "People are looking for good, wholesome family entertainment."

The World on Ice unit was sporting

new decals by Grand Designs, Los Angeles, at the date here in Long Beach. The 15 semis were emblazoned with the decals the week prior.

Promotions that helped post the tremendous increase in business included one with Knudsen's dairies, sponsoring a night and offering discounts through carton stuffers; one with the Los Angeles Times, which sold out opening night, and a Nissan promotion, offering a ticket with a test drive. A lot of attention was focused on ethnic radio stations this year, said Scot Smith, regional manager for Ringling.

Tickets to the show were \$9.50, \$8 and \$6, the same as last year. The show ran two hours and 20 minutes.

Smith said set up took eight hours, tear down four.

Star of the show produced by the late Irvin Feld and Kenneth Feld, is Olympic medalist Rosalynn Summers. Jimmy Santee, Jamie-Lynn Kitching, comedy skater Bill Wall, Lehmann & Wiesinger, Sheldon Cleaves, Brenda and Greg Ladret, and Randy Nelson with his custom-built, two-wheeled chopper on ice, are also featured.

Key personnel include Bob Paul, skating director and choreographer; Jerry Bilik theatrical director and writer and music director; Reid Carlson, scenic designer; Eduardo Sincanco, costume designer, and Jill Shipstad Thomas, assistant choreographer. Peiter Peyper is company manager.

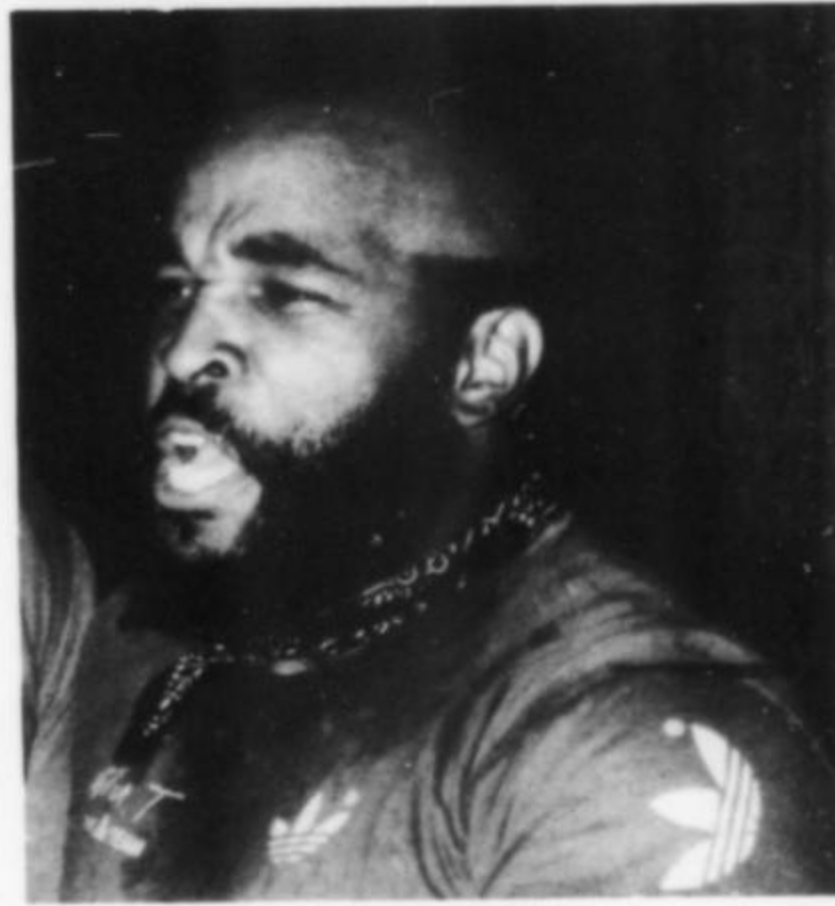


OVERSEAS ICE SHOW — Walt Disney's World on Ice will be sailing for Japan in July, according to Allen Bloom, left, senior vice president of marketing and sales for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. It will be the first time since Kenneth Feld has owned the ice shows that one has been booked overseas. Bloom and Doug Logan, right, manager of the Rockford (Ill.) MetroCentre, were seen at the District VII convention of the International Assn. of Auditorium Managers in Long Beach, Calif., Feb. 2-6. (AB Photo)

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